

On Top Of The News

Email: news@arubatoday.com

Website: www.arubatoday.com Thursday, March 12, 2009



**Price of a barrel
of petroleum
today:**

US\$ 42.33

**INSIDE TODAY
U.S. NEWS**

GAS PROBLEMS



Space Shuttle Discovery sits on pad 39A at the Kennedy Space Station, Fla. ready for launch Wednesday March 11, 2009. Discovery's seven member crew will deliver the International Space Station's final set of solar panels and replace a failed unit that converts urine to potable water.

See INTERNATIONAL NEWS

SPORTS NEWS

HONKERS HEAVEN



Netherlands' Randall Simon, below, cries as he is consoled by teammate Gene Kingsale after their 2-1 victory over Dominican Republic in the eleventh inning of a World Baseball Classic game in San Juan, Tuesday, March 10, 2009.

See Sports Today

The Village welcomes Camacuri Bikers' Club



PALM BEACH – Recently, the Camacuri Biker held a press conference at The Village in Palm Beach. They

are preparing for a big event on March 15 as the group of 450 bikers will enjoy a rocking good time at The Village across



from the Radisson Resort. This weekend's event is a precursor to celebrating Aruba's Anthem and Flag Day in style on March 18th, which is an official holiday on Aruba.

Not only will the Arubans be on their hogs for the event, they have welcomed tourists from all around the world to join, as well as sister island bikers from Bonaire and Curacao.

The pictures show a recent press conference held in the center of The Village in Palm Beach.

Photos by Julia Renfro



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Cactus Jack invites Camacuri Bikers for an evening of fun



PALM BEACH - On March 15 the Bikers of the Camacuri Bikers' Club are invited at Cactus Jack for an evening of fun. The fun is at The Village, across from the Radisson Resort, where quite a lot of biking activities will be taking place these days. One of these is held at newly opened chicken-and-ribs Cactus Jack Restaurant; deejay Vince will be playing his rousing music from 6

pm and an outside bar is serving beers at AWG. 5,- a pop. Still a secret: a great band is expected to play in The Village courtyard as well.

The Bikers of Camacuri do not need any introduction. The group can be seen revving their impressive motorcycles now and then during local outings. Celebrating our Anthem and Flag Day in style, the Aruban bikers have

invited their Curaçao and Bonairean friends and colleague-afficionados to come and ride with them during a trip around the island on Sunday, March 15. The ride finishes at The Village, which is hosting the 450-strong group with pride and pleasure.

Manager Ashwin of Cactus Jack is greatly looking forward to the 15th, when Piggy Twiggy outside will invite the bikers and



their friends to go wild. Piggy Twiggy is more or less expected to perform a striptease, but better not bet on it. A sure thing, however, is that there will be drinks, ribs and chickens in abundance for anyone who is hungry. The special AWG. 5,- price for beers is for Heineken, Budweiser and Balashi Beers. And bikers and friends, keep your eyes peeled: lovelier ladies than Piggy Twiggy will be dancing on Cactus Jack's tables on the 15th... Photos show hostess Sabrina with Piggy Twiggy and the waiting staff of Cactus Jack practicing Sabrina's elegant moves. □



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Aruba Wine & Dine rewards excellence



PALM BEACH – The Aruba Wine & Dine group just recently rewarded outstanding associates for their excellence.

Tango Front of house: Viviana Gomez has been a loyal employee of Tango for 4 years now. She is very flexible, efficient, a quick learner and has great motivation.

Viviana is a real team-player, she is always at work half an hour early and starts to set up the restaurant in her own time, making the work process easier for her colleagues.

Viviana is easy to interact with, always puts

the guests' needs first and is a very valuable member of the Tango team!

Chino Latino back of house: Mireya Valentina Terez de la Cruz has been working at Chino Latino since its opening last December. She is a hard-working employee, who is committed to her duties and always performs them with great joy.

Mireya is always on time and doesn't mind to work extra when she is needed. She always goes that extra mile and is a great addition to the Chino Latino Team! □



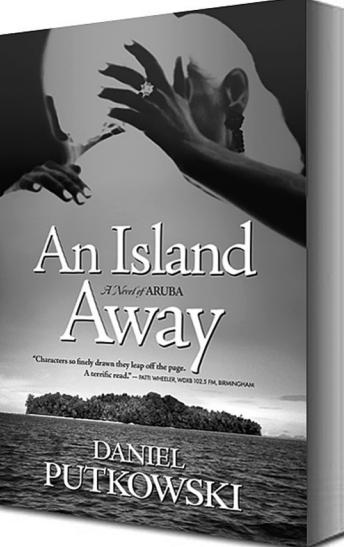
Marriott's Aruba Surf Club General Manager Scott Derrickson and Assistant Director of Rooms Claudia Sanchez.

At Marriott's Aruba Surf Club Claudia Sanchez Appointed Assistant Director Of Rooms

PALM BEACH – Recently Claudia Sanchez was promoted to assistant Director of Rooms at Marriott's Aruba Surf Club. Marriott's Aruba Surf Club is a Marriott Vacation Club property that consists of 450 two- and three bedroom villas. In her new position as assistant Director of Rooms of this vacation ownership property, Claudia will be assisting Director of Rooms, Laetitia Hodge. She will be responsible mainly for the Front Office department and serve as the main contact for guests and owners. "With her knowledge and experience within Marriott, the Surf Club team welcomes Claudia with open arms. We are very pleased to have her on our team and look forward to working with Claudia. We wish her all the best and congratulate her on her promotion", Scott Derrickson, General Manager of Marriott's Aruba Surf Club stated.

Claudia has been employed at the Aruba Marriott since October 2002, where she started her career as Recreation Manager of the Aruba Marriott Resort & Stellaris Casino (hotel). Since then she has expanded her management skills and hospitality experience in various management positions such as Front Desk Manager and Guest Relations Manager at the Aruba Marriott Resort. Most recently she served in the position of assistant Front Office Manager. She has shown great leadership in her role at the Front Office especially during the 18 month, \$50 million dollar renovation process of the hotel that was completed early January of 2009. □

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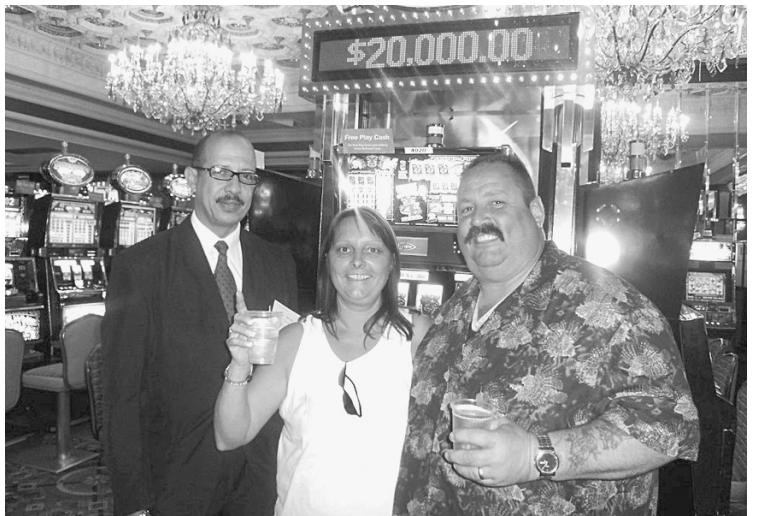
Loyal visitors honored at the Divi Resort



Recently at the Divi Resort, Aruba vacationers were presented with honorary titles created by the Ministry of Tourism as a token of appreciation to guest visiting Aruba for ten and 20 consecutive years. Special friends of Aruba, enjoying ten or more annual vacations here, are given the Distinguished Guest certificate and those with twenty consecutive years are awarded the Ambassador of goodwill title. The recent honoring were effected by the Aruba

The Machines Continue to be Loose

CRYSTAL CASINO Continues to Give Out Prizes



ORANJESTAD - The slot machines at Crystal Casino continue to be loose these days. This time the machine

Tourism Authority associate Ricardo Croes at the Divi Resort which they call their home away from home. The following guests were honored as an Distinguished visitor for the Island of Aruba after coming to the Island for 10 years : Ralph & Evelyn Grassia, Donna & John Finnerty and also Charlie & Sandy Mc Laughlin

On picture Mr. Ricardo Croes together with honorees and also Lisa from the Divi Resort □

better known as King Tiki, stopped on the 3-X King Tiki Combination that made the player, James Kenneth Pearce from Pinkey, Michigan, USA. start jumping and screaming of joy.

The tourist had just won US\$20,000 playing the machine for only 20 minutes. On the pictures attached you can see the happy winner. He made sure everyone knew, he'd come back to Aruba and without fail visit Crystal Casino, were winning is a certainty!! □





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Loyal visitors honored at the Divi Village Resort



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Special friends of Aruba, enjoying ten or more annual vacations here, are given the Distinguished Guest certificate and those with twenty consecutive years are awarded the Ambassador of goodwill title. The recent

honorings were effected by the Aruba Tourism Authority associate Ricardo Croes at the Divi Village Resort which they call their home away from home.

The following visitors were honored as an Distinguished visitor for the Island of Aruba after coming to the Island for more than 10 years :

Gerrad & Shirley Mollenhauer, James & Leigh Kennedy, Bob & Lampe, Peter & Susanne Loal, Bob & Teri Glynn, John & Sylvia Thume, Robert & Anne Longabard, and also Philip & Patricia Hewes and Leonard & Reta Busse were honored as an Ambassador of Goodwill after visiting Aruba for 21 years.

Congratulation to Leonard & Reta Busse for their 50 wedding anniversary.

Pictured: Mr. Ricardo Croes together with honorees and also Gloria from the Divi Village Resort. □



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Aruban politician campaigning for a position in the European Parliament

Mito Croes meticulously planned his participation as a candidate in the European Parliament elections

ORANJESTAD—He needs 20,000 votes to become a Euro Parliament member, and Dr. Mito Croes is rolling up the sleeves a little bit further up to achieve this next step. Croes was just in Aruba this week to ‘campaign,’ on his native island to get the support needed to enter the European Union Parliament, through the elections that are programmed for June 9.

This will be the first time that Aruban citizens will have the opportunity to vote for the European Parliament, and it was Mito Croes who enabled this, in a journey that took years. As the former Proxy Minister of Aruba in Holland, Mito Croes realized that fighting the European Union on economic issues was a loosing battle. Aruba tried to make use of the sugar and rice tariffs facilities that Europe granted to overseas regions, yet was constantly confronted with changes in policies. “We tried to fight this through the legal system, but it was just an expensive, futile undertaking,” Croes said.

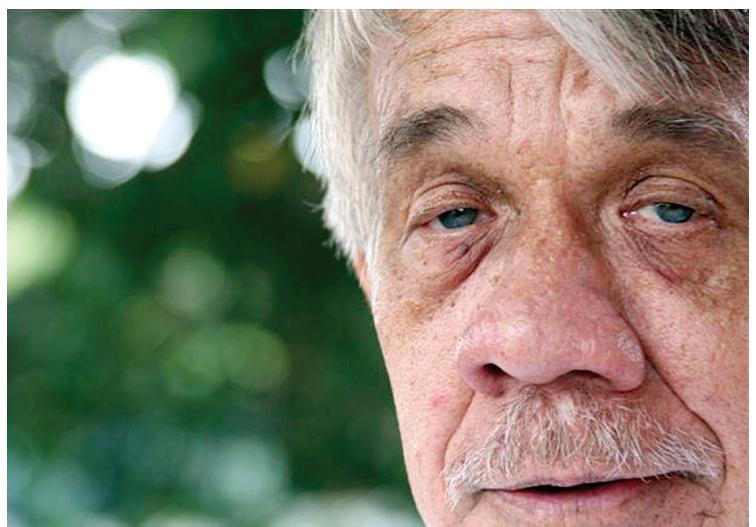
That is when he decided it would be better to find ways to work with the European Union and even more so, to truly make use of our rights as European citizens, an opinion not shared then by Dutch politicians. Croes was not planning on entering this debate unprepared and thus went on to do his own scientific investigation on what constitutes the Kingdom

of The Netherlands, which in fact is the member country of the European Union.

Shortly upon obtaining his PhD on this matter, Mito Croes assisted two Aruban politicians Mike Eman and Benny Sevinger, who ‘tried out,’ the theory of European citizenship and therefore applying for the right the vote in the last European Union Parliamentary elections. Their application was rejected by Dutch authorities, and the test case ended up at the European Court, in front of 25 judges and lawyers from many European Union members interested in the outcome. “There were

had territories outside Europe, and some already granted or acknowledge the European citizenship of the subjects living in those territories, like France,” Mito Croes explained.

The conclusion of the European Court was unmistakable. It concluded the Dutch election law was discriminatory toward Dutch citizens living in the other countries of the Kingdom, namely The Netherlands Antilles and Aruba. Last year the Dutch Parliament modified the law to allow Dutch citizens born and living in The Netherlands Antilles and Aruba to vote for



have to obtain at least 200,000 votes. That is impossible, even if all of Aruba and Netherlands Antilles decided to vote for the party. Croes figured out

before voted for the party. So far, the interest of these groups for Dr. Croes is promising, he said.

His campaign brought him to Aruba in the past week, where he spoke with many people, especially on what the European Union could mean for Aruba, and its development. Aruba can provide the Union an ideal gateway for many new developments, which in turn will help the island diversify its economy and therefore, provide the Aruban intellectuals and professionals more growth potentials. At present, many academics remain in Europe. The same goes for The Netherlands Antilles, his next stop on his campaign. Croes had various interviews and presentations scheduled there to elaborate on the value of the European Union.

As for being a lonely voice in the 800-person Parliament, should he be elected? Croes said he is not worried, as the European Parliament works on basis of networks and affiliations.

“It is like a big lobby machine.” Croes is convinced he will find his place in the network of Christian Democrat parties within the European Parliament. He has all reasons to be confident. Having meticulously planned his route to this point, people should not be surprised if Mito Croes will again pull out surprises in order to reach his objective, namely to make Aruba truly a member of the European Union family. □



representatives from France, England, Spain and others who had a vested interest in the outcome of the case. All

the European Parliament as well.

But that was just part of the battle of Mito Croes. His goal is not just to vote, but also to ensure Aruba truly has a voice in the European Parliament. After a tedious process, where he had to argue and debate his candidacy, he was accepted as a candidate for the European Parliament, for the Christian Democrat Party in The Netherlands, CDA. CDA, of Dutch Premier Jan Peter Balkenende, shares the same political philosophy with Mito Croes’ political affiliation, AVP in Aruba. However, for AVP to participate in the elections, the party would

that joining CDA, he ‘only’ needed 20,000 votes to enter the Parliament.

He is now occupies the number 11 position on the CDA European Parliament list. “We (AVP) did not go for a position higher on the list, since our goal is to work hard to convince the Aruba and Antillean communities of the importance of the European Union. The people here have to become more aware of the enormous possibilities that further affiliation with the Union can provide.”

Dr. Croes’ task for CDA is now to gather support from Antilleans and Arubans living in Holland, people who never



According to Richard Gibson

No re-negotiations if Curaçao says 'No'

THE HAGUE--If the people of Curaçao decide to vote "No" in the upcoming referendum, the total package of constitutional reform as agreed to at the December 15 Round Table Conference (RTC) is off the table. Several members of the Second Chamber expressed this view Tuesday. "We assume that if Curaçao says 'No,' things are over and out," said Member of Parliament (MP) Jan Schinkelshoek of the governing Christian Democratic Party CDA during a meeting of Parliament's Permanent Committee of Antillean and Aruban Affairs NAAZ in The Hague Tuesday.

Most members of the committee agreed that Curaçao would sell itself short if it were to reject the decisions taken at the recent RTC. "Curaçao should be aware to what it would say 'No,'" said Schinkelshoek. "We are sticking to the agreement from A to Z."

MP Johan Remkes of the liberal democratic VVD party put it a bit harsher. "If it is a 'No,' we will not re-negotiate. But I would like to go a step further. If it is 'No,' the reorganising of the debt is off the table," he said.

Remkes said if Curaçao rejected the decisions of RTC, this would be the end of the current structure of the Dutch Kingdom. He suggested the island would have to consider assuming a more independent position

in the Kingdom and mentioned a Commonwealth structure, or "if they want to, independence."

MP Ineke van Gent of the green left party GroenLinks agreed this was a one-time opportunity for Curaçao to make a fresh start and reorganise the island's debts. However, she was

concerned that, ultimately, the people would suffer if the debts were not reorganised. "The people should not become the victims," she said.

State Secretary of Kingdom Relations Ank Bijleveld-Schouten, who attended Tuesday's meeting, confirmed the Netherlands

would not be re-negotiating the November 2006 Final Declaration if Curaçao voted 'No' in the upcoming referendum.

Several Members of Parliament asked the State Secretary if there was a "Plan B" in case Curaçao voted 'No', and if St. Maarten would not

be able to comply with all conditions to become a country. Bijleveld-Schouten said the implementation of the Final Declaration was Plan A and would remain Plan A. She added, "of course" a Plan B was being considered, but for now, she would not go into details on that. □



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Aruba TODAY

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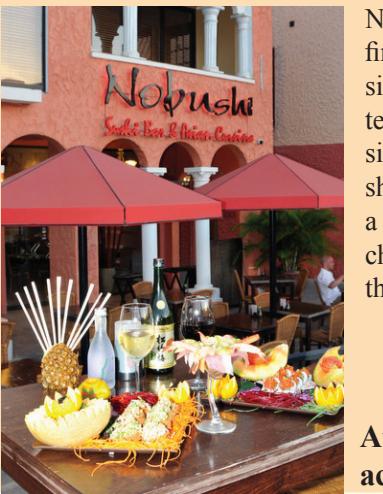


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PASEO HERENCIA - inside is studded with artwork, amazing glass carvings, and both floors are dominated by gigantic fountains, with water running from ceiling to floor along multicoloured lit fibre optic cables. The this is, and what a unique interior to match. The

runs along the complete wall. The menu promises to be a true seafood lovers dream. Lobsters, fresh fish fillets, shrimps, Moby Dick's has everything on the menu. There is of course a land lubbers section for those who are so disposed. The wine list is impressive to say the least, and the cocktails are definitely worth a taste.

Moby Dick's is open for lunch as well. The chef has made a well rounded, extensive menu for you to choose from. You will find what you want, whatever your craving may be at that time. The staff is amongst the friendliest on the island, ever so attentive to your every whim. So long story short, for unbelievable seafood in unique surroundings, go to Moby Dick's. You'll have a whale of a time!



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DOWNTOWN-Casa Tua draws a crowd of local and not-so-local folks who can't seem to get enough of the pizza and the place. There's almost always a wait here, even if you have reservations, so place yourself at the bar with the smell of brick oven pizzas wafting to other tables, and knowing that at some point, that bliss will be yours.

Al fresco dining is designed with a chicly rustic feel. The atmosphere is cool and relaxed, "Casa Tua" meaning "Your Home" in Italian. With a Sicilian-style thin crust, dripping with cheese and fresh-made tomato

sauce, this pizza comes with a variety of toppings in the meat and veggie categories. Pasta dishes, full Italian meals like Lasagne and veal Osso Buco, fresh salads and rich desserts are also on the menu. Casa Tua's famous secret thin crust recipe was handed



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Matilde caters to Copa Airlines at Mansion Madruga



ORANJESTAD - Copa Airlines, now flying into Aruba a number of times a week, opened vacation possibilities from the residents of South America. In order to cultivate interest in the Aruba vacation experience in Central America, Matilde Restaurant catered an exquisite gourmet dinner party at the Mansion

Mdruga. The guests loved the meal and fabulous ambiance hosted by event coordinator Fernando Mansur.

Matilde offers you a wide range of possibilities for your meetings, private reunions, high-profile launches or exclusive incentive rewards. Accuracy and eye for detail is what you can expect at



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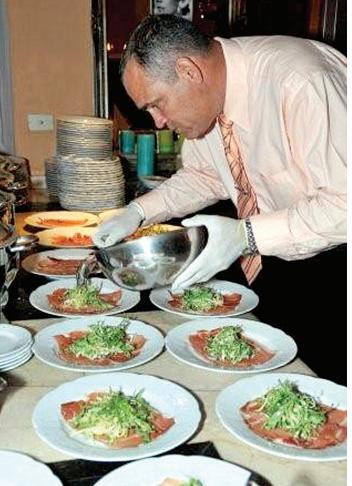
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Hadicurari honors local fishermen with an outstanding fish buffet

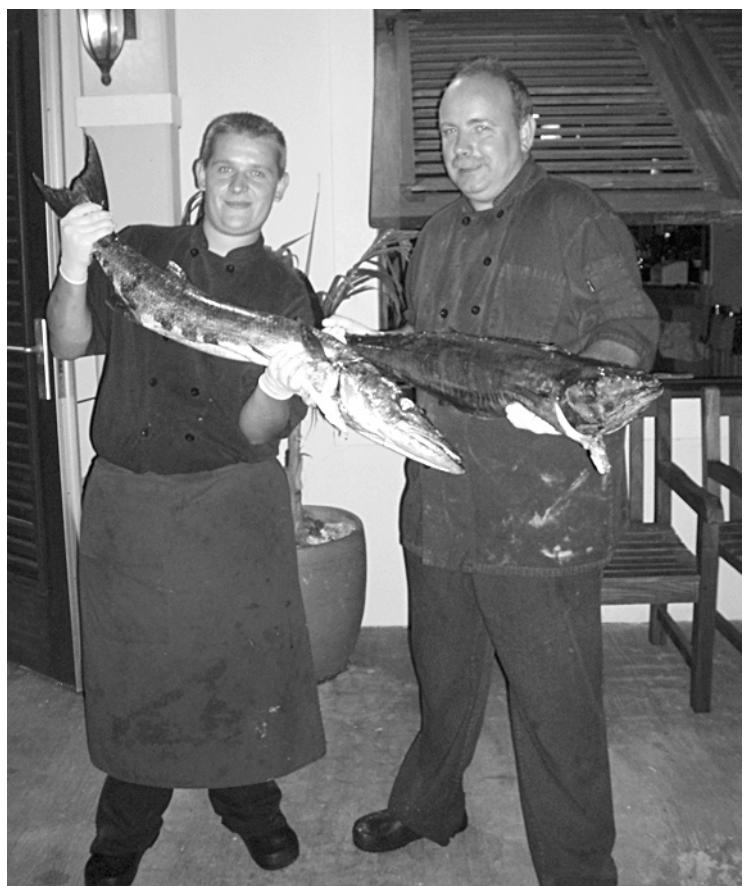
PALM BEACH - Hadicurari, the fabulous restaurant on the Marriott Beach across from MooMba Beach is going all-out in honoring Aruba's local fishermen. A giant fish buffet of fresh catches will be ready for you on Sunday afternoons. The buffet includes fish soup, shrimps, mahi mahi, grouper, red snapper, wahoo and a superb salad bar with potato salad, pasta salad and tuna and crab salad. Chef John Boomkamp promises that fish

lovers will be in heaven.

The fish will be served hot from the grill; one might encounter fish wrapped in banana leaves or foil. Two fish booths ('viskramen' in Dutch) display the various salads. John's kitchen team of four as well as Hadicurari's 6-person serving team are going to be in top form on Sunday afternoons for sure. For those who are not too crazy about fish (yes, that is possible) there is always the à la carte menu.

Not included in the price of US \$ 30.-- are the wines, but Hadicurari has a daily special of a glass of Carmen Chardonnay or Merlot from Chile for just US \$5.-- to make the fish feast complete. Do not forget to leave room for one of the restaurant's excellent desserts: the cheese cake and chocolate cake from the menu get rave reviews! Should you skip dessert, then have an after dinner drink or specialty coffee and watch the sunset color the beach a peachy rose.

Hadicurari's Sunday Fish Buffet is open from 5 to 10 pm. Locals receive a pleasant financial surprise. Reservations can be made via 586-2288. The restaurant's website is hadicurari@arubawineanddine.com.



AAA announces new parking lot fee at the airport



ORANJESTAD - As per April 1, 2009 the Aruba Airport Authority N.V. will increase the hourly parking rate with AWG 0.50 per hour, therefore to AWG 3.00 per hour for the parking of a vehicle within the public parking lot at the airport.

In light of the increased costs for maintenance of the parking equipment AAA will have to increase its rates which had not been adjusted since April of 2007. The rates per hour will thus be as follows:

Parking ticket rate schedule as of 1 April 2009

Parking time		Cost
<	1 hr	3.00
1	- 2 hr	6.00
2	- 3 hr	9.00
3	- 4 hr	12.00
4	- 5 hr	15.00
5	- 6 hr	18.00
6	- 7 hr	21.00
7	- 8 hr	24.00
8	- 9 hr	27.00
9	- 24 hr	30.00
24	- 25 hr	33.00
25	- 26 hr	36.00
26	- 27 hr	39.00
27	- 28 hr	42.00
28	- 29 hr	45.00
29	- 30 hr	48.00
30	- 31 hr	51.00
31	- 32 hr	54.00
32	- 33 hr	57.00
33	- 48 hr	60.00
48	- 49 hr	63.00
49	- 50 hr	66.00
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Duped clients of Stanford uniting

WILLEMSTAD--A few hundred people in the Netherlands Antilles and Aruba had accounts with Stanford International Bank in Antigua. Some 28,000 account holders worldwide are at risk of losing substantial deposits because the bank is under supervision.

Bank front man Texas billionaire Robert Allen Stanford is suspected of an enormous investment fraud of about US \$8 billion.

Law firms Braam & Pols and HBN Law are busy with a procedure to unite the duped clients and try to recoup the lost money. The law firms' telephones have been ringing off the hook with calls from concerned account holders. Lawyer Bertie Braam has gathered a group of 25 to 30 persons and expects a large group from Venezuela to join.

Many clients initially took a wait-and-see position. They thought their accounts would be freed up again, because up until two months ago they were being paid as usual.

The tragedy started late last month. It was still possible to draw money from the current account in the beginning, and then the accounts were frozen.

The deposits of the local account holders vary from US \$10,000 to more than one million dollars, with a total estimate of a couple to tens

of millions. The high interest for certificates of deposit (CDs), sometimes double the interest of a local bank, won the investors over.

Some clients won't be in so much trouble financially, despite the possible loss of their money. But for a number of clients it was their retirement money, of which the interest covered their cost of living, and these clients are now in financial trouble, said Braam. A ray of hope is that a lot has been invested in real estate by the bank, said Braam. Selling these would also bring in a substantial amount of money.

Besides, East Caribbean Central Bank has announced wanting to purchase the Stanford bank in Antigua. The receiver in the US must still come to take stock, which will take a few months.

There is a civil case against Stanford. He has apparently misled the business by making worthless investments.

Braam cannot understand that Stanford is not also being prosecuted criminally. "It is purely a pyramid construction, a Ponzi-scheme. Stanford continued to attract investors, so he could make the distribution of dividends, but at a certain point the supply runs out. He has enriched himself and is currently a free man walking around with all the possibilities to tamper with

evidence."

Also the Securities & Exchange Commission, the supervisor, has failed, according to Braam, because they did not act sooner. The attorney said that he was also approached by the representative of Stanford in Miami Norbert Nieuw, whose telephone is still on an answering machine.

The very luxurious brown brochures almost won him over as well, admitted Braam. But the high interest percentages that Stanford

promised were "too good to be true."

The duped account holders can kick themselves now for being so naive, but people cannot always be blamed for greediness. "Stanford has been in business since 1932 and if you have a nice capital, you will want an interest as high as possible."

Several law firms in the US are also putting ads in the newspapers, inciting duped customers of Stanford to report. But Braam says that the Americans are asking a

US \$5,000 advance, which keeps the account holders that have already lost so much money from reacting. The Americans are also asking 33.3 per cent of the money, if recouped. Braam said the two Antillean law firms won't demand that percentage. He's busy with preliminary work and has also approached businesses in the US to build a front to submit a claim to the receiver on behalf of the duped customers who reported to his office. □

Caribbean Human Resources Meeting in Curacao

Bridgetown, Barbados, Mar 9 (Prensa Latina) The current global economic crisis and its impact on the workforce will center the attention of Caribbean tourism human resources professionals at their 5th conference in May in Curacao. Sponsored by the Caribbean Tourism Organization (CTO), the meeting is slated for 27-29 May, having the Hilton Hotel in Curacao as its venue, says a CTO press release made public here.

A session entitled "Learning from the Best Success Strategies in Tough Economic Times" will deal with the central topic. Also, delegates will participate in a workshop on Managing Stress in Difficult Times.

"Like the rest of the workforce, tourism

human resources professionals have to grapple with the impact of the global economic meltdown," said Bonita Morgan, the CTO's director of human resources, "therefore, it's important that we explore strategies that work in difficult times and learn from each other's experiences." During the three-day conference the regional human resource professionals will explore a range of issues relating to tourism human resources development, including creating hospitable experiences. The 5th Tourism Human Resources conference, will be attended by tourism educators, trainers and human resource professionals and is being organized in collaboration with the Curacao Tourism Board. □



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BUSINESS

Aruba TODAY

Freddie Mac seeks \$30.8B in US aid after 4Q loss

By ALAN ZIBEL,
AP Real Estate Writer

WASHINGTON — Freddie Mac, facing mounting damage from the U.S. housing crisis, said Wednesday it will ask the government for nearly \$31 billion in additional aid after posting a gargantuan loss of more than \$50 billion last year.

The report comes just weeks

after Fannie Mae said it would need more than \$15 billion in government assistance after losing almost \$60 billion last year.

The two companies, which were seized by the government last fall, are critical to the health of the U.S. real estate market. Together, Fannie and Freddie own or guarantee more than half of all U.S. home loans.

The Treasury Department has pledged up to \$400 billion in aid for the duo. But as losses mount, many analysts see the companies remaining under government control, perhaps indefinitely. Until officials know the final bill for the housing crisis, it will be tough to figure out whether they can be spun off as private companies, said debt analyst

Ford says modified UAW pact brings foreign parity



In this Dec. 28, 2008 file photo, the company logo shines off the grille of an unsold 2009 F-150 Platinum pickup truck at a Ford dealership in the west Denver suburb of Lakewood, Colo. Ford Motor Co. on Wednesday, March 4, 2009 said it will eliminate up to \$10.4 billion of its debt by offering debtholders cash and stock instead, as the automaker continues to restructure amid a severe automotive sales downturn.

(AP Photo/David Zalubowski, file)

By KIMBERLY S. JOHNSON,
AP Auto Writer

DETROIT — Ford Motor Co. said Wednesday that recent modifications to its contract with the United Auto Workers union would help the company achieve parity with wages paid in the United States by overseas-based automakers. In a conference call to review changes to the 2007 collective bargaining agreement, Ford said its labor and benefit costs would total \$55 an hour by the end of the year, compared with estimates of \$48 to \$49 at foreign automaker plants in the U.S.

"We looked at transplants and our European divisions, and that drove us to a certain target with the UAW," said Joe Hinrichs, group vice president of global manufacturing and labor affairs for Ford, during a conference call regarding the

changes.

"We looked at our cost structure with how we were making profits in other parts of the world," he said. "We're working with what we know works."

Hinrichs said that Ford believes labor costs at foreign transplants are rising, so the \$55 cost gets it "within the ballpark." The Dearborn-based automaker said that further parity would be achieved in the following years, but did not offer specific numbers.

UAW members approved the concessions in voting ending Monday, with 59 percent of Ford's production workers and 58 percent of skilled-trades workers voting for the concessions. At least two local unions rejected the measures. The changes eliminate cost-of-living increases and performance bonuses of 3

percent of base earnings in 2009 and 2010. The jobs bank, a program that paid laid-off workers most of their pay even after unemployment benefits have run out, has been eliminated. Payments used to supplement unemployment benefits will be paid to laid-off workers for 26 to 52 weeks, depending on seniority.

The combined modifications are expected to result in annual cost savings of \$500 million, with half the savings coming from a direct cut of bonuses and benefits. The indirect savings come from changes in health benefits and payments made to a union-run trust for retiree benefits in stock instead of cash. Ford will also offer a buyout to all hourly employees, except for certain highly skilled positions.

Operations at Wayne Assembly and Michigan Truck will be combined at Michigan Truck as that facility in Wayne, Mich., is being retooled to make smaller, more fuel efficient cars.

Ford is trying to bring its costs in line with slowing demand as it weathers the worst auto sales downturn in 27 years. Payments to the trust made in stock will have a fixed price of \$2 a share in 2009, \$2.10 in 2010 and \$2.20 in 2011. Ford would give up the option to make up to 50 percent of its union-trust payments in stock if the company's shares fall below \$1. □



The Freddie Mac headquarters in McLean, Virginia. Freddie Mac, the ailing US mortgage finance giant seized by the government, reported Wednesday a 2008 net loss of 50.1 billion dollars, nearly half of which occurred in the fourth quarter.

(AFP/File/Paul J. Richards)

Jim Vogel of FTN Financial in Memphis, Tenn.

"No one's going to be confident yet to either plan or look forward until they see another two quarters," he said.

Meanwhile, Freddie Mac's chief executive, David Moffett, is stepping down this week after six months on the job

"We absorbed heavy financial losses," Moffett said in a statement.

"But we also provided vital liquidity to the strapped housing market."

John Koskinen, a member of Freddie's board of directors, will temporarily replace Moffett as the top executive, the company said Wednesday. Koskinen is a corporate restructuring expert who spent two years directing planning for the "Year 2000" computer conversion.

The interim CEO has his work cut out for him.

Freddie's request for \$30.8 billion in federal aid comes on top of \$13.8 billion the McLean, Va.-based company received last year. Freddie Mac was forced to go back, hat-in-hand, because its net worth — the value of its assets minus the value of its liabilities — fell below zero.

The recent loss was driven by \$13.2 billion in hedged trades,

\$7.2 billion in credit losses from the declining housing market conditions and \$7.5 billion in writedowns of the value of its mortgage-backed securities. The company also took a charge of \$8.3 billion for now-worthless tax credits. The faltering economy, driven down by the collapse of the housing bubble, is causing the housing crisis to spread. Nearly 12 percent of all Americans with a mortgage — a record 5.4 million homeowners — were at least one month late or in foreclosure at the end of last year, according to the Mortgage Bankers Association.

Fannie and Freddie are both being called upon to advance President Barack Obama's agenda of helping up to 9 million borrowers avoid foreclosure through refinanced mortgages or loans that are modified to lower monthly payments.

Freddie Mac said that 1.7 percent of the single-family loans it owns or guarantees were delinquent at the end of the December, up from 1.2 percent in September and 0.65 percent a year earlier. The number of foreclosed properties owned by the company grew to more than 29,000, about double their level at the end of 2007. □



Disgraced Wall Street financier Bernard Madoff (C) leaves US Federal Court after a hearing on March 10, 2009 in New York. Madoff's victims are set to confront the alleged swindler when he pleads guilty Thursday, but recovering the 177 billion dollars Madoff allegedly stole will be harder.

(AFP/File/Stan Honda)

Stocks extend gains into second day

By SARA LEPRO and TIM PARADIS,
AP Business Writer

NEW YORK – It took some work, but investors managed to turn Wall Street's best performance this year into a two-day advance.

Stocks ended with modest gains Wednesday but the Dow Jones industrial average still recorded its first two-day climb since Feb. 5-6. The buying was far more subdued than on Tuesday when Citigroup Inc.'s upbeat assessment of its business sent investors rushing into the market, in part to cover bets that stocks would continue to slide. The Dow on Wednesday ended up nearly 4 points after jumping 379 the day before.

The session's mood was more tentative than some investors might have hoped for, but given the market's dismal performance for much of 2009, just holding on to gains from the rally was a victory.

Financial stocks that led the market's huge rally Tuesday continued to pull ahead Wednesday. Tech stocks rose after an analyst raised Hewlett-Packard Co.'s rating.

But analysts again cautioned that the market remains deeply troubled by the problems in the banking industry and the impact of the recession on companies in all industries. And, they noted that there was little conviction behind Tuesday's buying.

Investors nervous about the economy likely will need more good news to keep buying.

"People are looking past the sizzle and saying 'where's the steak?'" said Doug Roberts, chief investment strategist for ChannelCapitalResearch.com.

Much of Tuesday's buying came from short covering, which occurs when investors need to buy stock to replace shares that were borrowed and then sold on expectations of a market decline.

On Wednesday, the head of the Securities and Exchange Commission said the agency "hopefully" will propose next month the reinstatement of the uptick rule, which aims to prevent a massive plunge in stock price fueled by short selling. The SEC eliminated the rule in 2007 and supporters say its absence has added to the market's volatility.

For there to be a sustained advance, there has to be "many, many days of positive tone and the market interpreting data and news as more positive than negative," said Roman Dubczak, head of equity capital markets at CIBC World Markets.

Many analysts are calling the market's advance this week a bear market rally. A bear market is defined as a drop of 20 percent from a market peak; rallies during bear markets tend to disappear quickly as investors remain pessimistic. □

Billionaire Stanford to take the 5th in fraud case

By JEFF CARLTON,
Associated Press Writer

DALLAS – Texas billionaire R. Allen Stanford and one of his top officials have asserted their Fifth Amendment right against self-incrimination in the federal government's fraud case against them and Stanford's companies, according to court documents filed Wednesday. Stanford said he will "decline to testify, provide an accounting or produce any documents" related to the Securities and Exchange Commission's civil case, which accuses him of running a "massive Ponzi scheme."

Finance chief James M. Davis, using similar language, also asserted his right not to incriminate himself.

The documents were filed Wednesday in federal district court in Dallas, a day before a hearing in which the SEC is expected to make a case for an injunction allowing a court-appointed receiver continued control over the assets of Stanford, Davis and Stanford Investment Group companies.

Stanford's signed statement was dated Monday. Davis' statement was signed Feb. 21, two days before he was scheduled to give a videotaped deposition in the case.

The SEC has accused Stanford and his top officers of an \$8 billion fraud related to certificates of deposits and other investments at the Stanford International Bank in Antigua. An

attorney for Stanford has denied the allegations made in civil court.

The only criminal charges that have been filed in the case are against Laura Pendergest-Holt, the firm's chief investment officer, who is accused of obstructing the investigation. An attorney for Pendergest-Holt filed a motion Tuesday requesting that the receiver's control over her assets be rescinded.

The documents filed by the SEC on Wednesday include the transcript of a Feb. 24 deposition given by Stanford's 81-year-old father, James, who lives in Mexia, and is listed as a Stanford International Bank board member. When asked by an SEC lawyer about how the bank operated and the source of his son's wealth, the elder Stanford repeatedly declined to answer.

In an interview with The Associated Press last month, James Stanford said his son should "do the right thing."

The filing also includes a series of e-mails from the general counsel of Stanford Investment Group to R. Allen Stanford, sent in the weeks before the SEC filed its civil complaint. The company's chief attorney, Mauricio Alvarado, sent a resignation letter saying he was "incredibly surprised and disappointed" after learning financial information about the company that was "in direct conflict to what I had been represented and led to believe during my entire tenure with the company." □

Gates world's richest as recession shrinks billionaires



Bill Gates, former Microsoft chairman reacts during a press conference on their charity foundation, on January 30, 2009 at the World Economic Forum in Davos. US tycoons are back on top with Gates again the world's richest man in a year when even billionaires felt the heat of the global recession.

(AFP/File/Fabrice Coffrini)

by Paola Messana

NEW YORK (AFP) – US tycoons are back on top with Microsoft founder Bill Gates again the world's richest man in a year when even billionaires felt the heat of the global recession, Forbes magazine said Wednesday.

The wealthy few did not escape big shocks this year, with net worth on the list of 793 billionaires -- down from 1,125 billionaires in 2008 -- plummeting to 2.4 trillion dollars from 4.4 trillion, Forbes said.

"The biggest news today is that we are here and there

still are billionaires," Forbes spokeswoman Monie Begley joked at a press conference.

The much-watched annual rich list put Gates back on top with a net worth of 40 billion dollars, although he saw his bank balance lose 18 billion over the last 12 months.

In second came investor Warren Buffett with 37 billion dollars, despite losing 25 billion dollars this year in the value of his Berkshire Hathaway shares.

Also losing 25 billion dollars, Mexican telecoms king Carlos Slim still managed to come in third with 35 billion dollars.

The US surge sent billionaires from India, Russia and Turkey into retreat.

US rich filled 10 of the 20 top spots and New York replaced Moscow as home to most billionaires, with 55 to 27. London comes in second with 28.

Russia, where wealth is closely tied to commodity prices, lost almost two thirds of its billionaires, down from 87 to 32. Russian oligarchs have long been famous for flaunting their wealth, but this year, none of them make it into the elite top 20, compared

to four in the 2008 list.

India lost more than half of its billionaires, with the total going from 53 to 24.

Two Indians appear in the top 20, notably steel magnate Lakshmi Mittal with just 19.3 billion dollars after losing 25.7 billion dollars over the last year.

New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg, at number 17, was notable as the only top 20 member to see a net gain.

That was not because of his salary, which is a symbolic one dollar a year, but thanks to re-evaluation of Bloomberg financial news agency after the mayor bought a 20 percent stake from Merrill Lynch last year for 4.5 billion dollars.

About 64 percent of the billionaires are self-made and their average age is 63.7, a slight rise resulting from the lower number of rich Russians and Chinese, whose average ages last year were 46 and 48. By contrast with that aging trend, Gates is a relatively youthful 53.

The youngest billionaire prize this year goes to Albert von Thurn und Taxis of Germany, who is 25 and listed as having 2.1 billion dollars. □

Driftwood Authentic Aruban Seafood Restaurant offers diners the ultimate dining experience in freshly line caught fish.

ORANJESTAD - Why should seafood enthusiast and other diners alike go to Driftwood Restaurant? Well let's start by mentioning that their fish is caught daily by the owner himself and prepared by a local chef. "Just like mama makes it." The food is fresh, the staff is friendly, and the place is definitely buzzing. If you want to catch your own fresh fish and can't stay for a sit-down dinner, enjoy their Charter Fishing trip and have them prepare it for you. Trust me; it doesn't get any fresher than this: From pier to plate as their motto says.



Fried fish would be the common choice, but you can get your entrée broiled, grilled or baked. However you can indulge in the more guilty options for lobster, Alaskan king crab legs, grouper, shrimp, Black Angus tenderloin and so forth. Ease your

conscience and add a salad or go all out and try their delicious crab cakes, fish soup, garlic escargots, lobster crepe and coconut shrimps before your hearty entrée.



While seafood stars at Driftwood, fish-phobic diners will not go hungry. They have a staggeringly vast menu, which doesn't miss much of anything, from authentic Aruban seafood, lobster, Alaskan king crab legs to chicken, lamb or steaks.

Q: Why do we serve only fresh line caught fish?
A: How fresh would you be after a net caught fish frozen import from Asia?



Driftwood restaurant has a long tradition of serving the best seafood and steaks for over 20 years!

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Restaurant information and reservation: open daily (closed on Tuesdays) from 5pm-10:30pm. Tel. 583-2515. Located at Klipstraat 12 in the heart of downtown Oranjestad, within driving distance from the resorts. □



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ORANJESTAD - Benjamin Petrochi has started the newest

export product of Aruba, locally produced cigars called 'Aruhiba'. These cigars are produced and cultivated in Aruba. Petrochi has always had an interest in the cigar business and has also sold cigars from outside, and now he is growing his own tobacco crop. After many attempts and trips to Santo Domingo and Cuba he started his own production and cultivation of "Aruhiba" cigars in Aruba. The process took 5 years Petrochi's dedication to the cigars is important for the molding and



process of making a perfect cigar which takes a long time. The cigar case is specially designed for the cigars with the logo 'Aruhiba' and 'Made in Aruba'. Petrochi considers 'Aruhiba' a promotion for Aruba through fine quality cigars.

The company sells international cigars as well. Buy a gift box of Aruhiba Corona with five cigars and get 1 free for \$35.00. Located at the Historic Dutch



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PALM BEACH – The health and calorie conscious among us need fear steakhouses no more. Whether it's a low-carb, low-fat, or even vegetarian diet you follow, Texas de Brazil Churrascaria fits into just about every dieter's menu plan.

Low carb eaters will have all their expectations surpassed with a tempting carnivorous selection of umpteen cuts of sizzling beef, pork, lamb, sausage, and poultry. The meats are prepared in the healthiest style of cooking—slow roasting—where much of the fat drips off in the roasting process, so those looking for a lower fat option to sautéing, pan frying, or deep frying will also be able to indulge.

The Brazilian-style steakhouse also offers up a garden full of healthy eats on a lavish 40-item seasonal salad bar, giving dieters plenty to choose from to accompany the

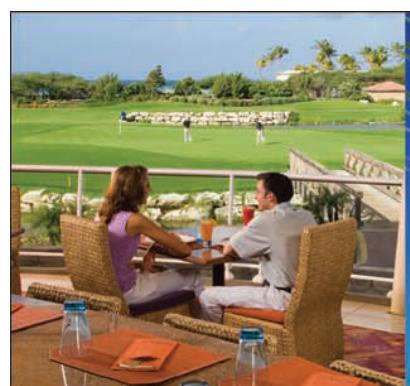
slow-roasted meats. A selection of fresh lettuces and vegetables may be standard for most salad bars, but **Texas de Brazil's** version goes a gourmet twist further, treating the palate to additional items like marinated portabella mushrooms, sweet roasted bell peppers, hearts of palm, sundried tomatoes, imported cheeses—including fresh buffalo mozzarella—sushi, homemade soups, and much more.

The salad bar is included in the continuous service meal with unlimited choices from the grilled meats, but for vegetarians or the non-meat eaters, a special price is offered for just the salad bar. Of course, for those looking to splurge while on vacation, **Texas de Brazil** will gladly serve their garlic mashed potatoes, traditional fried plantains, and their world-famous parmesan cheese bread as part of the meal.

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On Top Of The News

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Thursday, March 12, 2009



President Barack Obama meets with Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner, Wednesday, March 11, 2009, in the Oval Office of the White House in Washington.

Associated Press
Read more on Page 4

Gas leak postpones space shuttle Discovery launch

By MARCIA DUNN

AP Aerospace Writer

CAPE CANAVERAL, Florida (AP) — NASA postponed the launch of space shuttle Discovery just hours before it was to head to the international space station Wednesday because of a hydrogen gas leak that could have been catastrophic at liftoff.

The leak was in a different part of the system that already has caused a vexing one-month delay.

Shuttle managers put off the launch until Monday but left open the possibility that the repair work might allow for an attempt Sunday.

The latest delay means Discovery's two-week flight must be shortened and some spacewalks cut out of the mission. That's because Discovery needs to be gone from the space station before a Russian Soyuz rocket blasts off March 26 with a fresh station crew.

If Discovery isn't flying by Monday — possibly Tuesday, stretching it — then it will have to wait until April.

Continued on Page B3



Space shuttle Discovery stands ready at pad39a in the early morning hours before a scheduled evening launch at Kennedy Space Center in Cape Canaveral, Fla., Wednesday, March 11, 2009.

Associated Press



With a toy truck and a scooter seen in the foreground, law enforcement officials from across the state investigate one of the crime scenes of a shooting rampage in Samson, Ala. on Tuesday afternoon, March 10, 2009. A gunman went on a shooting spree in two neighboring south Alabama towns Tuesday, killing at least nine people before he shot himself at a metals plant, authorities said.

Associated Press

Official says Alabama shooter had revenge list

By JESSICA GRESKO and DESIREE HUNTER

Associated Press Writer

SAMSON, Alabama (AP) — A man who killed 10 people and himself in an hour-long rampage in Alabama had been keeping a list of those "who done him wrong," a district attorney said Wednesday.

Continued on Page B5

Teen kills 15 in Germany before taking his own life



A police officer escorts pupils leaving an elementary school on the same complex as neighbouring Albertville high school in Winnenden, near Stuttgart, Germany, Wednesday, March 11, 2009. A 17-year-old gunman dressed in black opened fire at his former high school in southwestern Germany on Wednesday, killing at least 11 people and injuring others before fleeing the scene, police said.

Associated Press

By VANESSA GERA

Associated Press Writer

WINNENDEN, Germany (AP) — A 17-year-old wielding a Beretta 9 mm pistol burst into classrooms at his former high school Wednesday and gunned down students — some of whom died with their pencils still in hand — in a rampage that ended with 15 dead before he took his own life, authorities said.

Continued on Page B6

UN predicts international tourism decline in 2009



A tree is seen on an Aruba beach, April, 2008. Despite the seeming serenity of the scene, across the highway lies a busy tourist strip mall. Aruba offers more than the sea for outdoor adventurers. Much of the northern side of the island is wild. In fact, about 20 percent of the island's 70 square miles lies within park boundaries.

By MARY LANE
Associated Press Writer
BERLIN (AP) — The United Nations' tourism organization

said Wednesday that international vacation travel could drop up to 2 percent in 2009 as the economic crisis

worsens. Europe's broad tourism industry would likely see the largest drop in visitors, but

Associated Press

that small countries dependent on foreign spending might suffer most, said Talib Rifai, secretary general of the U.N. World Tourism Organization. Approximately 924 million tourists traveled across international borders in 2008, Rifai said — or 2 percent more than the previous year, though the numbers fell sharply in the last six months as economic worry prompted people to curb spending.

Rifai called the increase modest compared with the "bullish years" of 2004-2007, when growth averaged 7 percent.

"This is not a tourism crisis. It's an economic crisis that spills over into tourism," Rifai said in Berlin, where he was attending a tourism trade fair. Still, he said his organization was predicting a drop of as much as 2 percent this year, based on the current situation.

A spokesman for the U.N. organization, however, said travel could fall by as much as 5 percent. "That's not an

official UNWTO position, but I'm being very straight with you," Geoffrey Lipman told reporters.

He said small countries whose gross domestic product is 70-80 percent dependent on service industries including tourism were most vulnerable. He and Rifai both declined to identify specific countries. Rifai said Europe's likely decline could be partially offset by a boon in new tourism from China. Some 45 million Chinese traveled abroad in 2008, and China hopes to double that number by 2012.

"Their government has said: We will send more tourists to Europe. We will help keep European tour operators strong," Rifai said.

He said Europeans and Americans were also likely to keep their plans to travel abroad.

"In the past 20 years, travel has become more of a right," he said. "The right to move around. The right to relax." □



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Person survives plunge over Niagara Falls

By CAROLYN THOMPSON

Associated Press Writer

NIAGARA FALLS, Ontario (AP) — A man survived a 180-foot (54-meter) plunge over Niagara Falls on Wednesday and then resisted rescuers' efforts to pull him from the icy water, police said.

The man, believed to be in his late 30s, was semiconscious

when he was rescued and was taken to a hospital in Niagara Falls, Canada. His condition was not immediately known. Niagara Parks Police Chief Doug Kane said the man was suffering from hypothermia and a head injury. Police were unable to get any information from the man because of the effects of the near-freezing

water.

Asked if the man was trying to kill himself, Kane said: "He voluntarily entered into the water and refused medical assistance at the bottom."

A witness called police telling them a man had jumped into the Horseshoe Falls on the Niagara's Canadian side. A short time later, he was seen

the last shuttle launch in November. The valves are part of the main propulsion system and control the flow of hydrogen gas into the fuel tank in order to maintain proper tank pressure.

The vent line for the tank — the one in question — also helps maintain proper pressure. Engineers were not sure where the leak originated, but a pressure-relief valve in the tank apparently did not work properly during fueling, officials said.

The cargo on Discovery includes 31,000 pounds of framework that holds two folded-up solar wings and a radiator. The space station already has six electricity-producing wings; the two going up will be the last ones and elevate the orbiting outpost to full power. □

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Rescuers pull a man from the frigid Niagara River after witnesses said he went over the Horseshoe Falls Wednesday March 11, 2009, in Niagara Falls, Ont. Canada. The man reportedly held on for about 30 minutes in the frigid Niagara River before rescuers pulled him to shore.

Associated Press

near the base of the falls. Specially trained falls rescue crews tried to assist the man but he swam away from them toward the middle of the river, Kane said.

A private helicopter from Niagara Falls Helicopter was called in and got close to the victim. Wind from the chopper's blades forced enough of a current to push him closer to shore where rescuers could get to him.

"He wasn't cooperative," the pilot, Ruedi Hafner, owner of Niagara Falls Helicopter, told The Associated Press. "He didn't try to be helpful. We had a sling on him and he got out of it."

Hafner said the man, who had a "big gashing injury" on his head, was in the water for about a half-hour and spent much of that time resisting attempts to help him.

A firefighter and another rescue worker swam about 60 yards (meters) from shore,

grabbed hold of him and hauled him in, said Niagara Fire Capt. David Belme.

"He was on a suicide mission, I assume," Hafner said.

"I've never, in my career, seen someone so tough, swimming between the ice."

The last person known to survive a plunge over the falls was Kirk Jones, a former auto parts salesman from Michigan who climbed down a small embankment and jumped into the Niagara River on Oct. 20, 2003.

Jones said he had been depressed and had been drinking vodka and cola when he went over the famous falls on the Canadian side, a drop of 180 feet (55 meters).

At least 17 people — not including suicide attempts — are known to have gone over the falls.

Niagara Falls consists of three waterfalls: the American Falls, Horseshoe Falls and Bridal Veil Falls. □

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Obama urges other nations to take stimulus action



Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner listens to President Barack Obama speak during their meeting, Wednesday, March 11, 2009, in the Oval Office of the White House in Washington.

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Just ahead of a major global economic summit, President Barack Obama called Wednesday for international allies to develop more aggressive steps to jump-start their own economies.

Obama told reporters after a White House meeting with Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner that efforts to pull the U.S. economy out of recession will falter without global coordination.

"We can do a really good job here at home, with a whole

host of policies, but if you continue to see deterioration in the world economy, that's going to set us back," Obama said.

Geithner outlined an ambitious agenda, including a tenfold increase in the size of emergency money the International Monetary Fund uses to help countries in trouble to as much as \$500 billion.

Geithner is headed to Britain this week for talks with the finance ministers of 20 advanced and developing

nations. Those meetings are a precursor to a leaders' summit on April 2 taking place in London early next month on the global financial crisis.

Obama's position puts the United States at odds with some European countries, including Germany, that believe it is more important to adopt better regulation of the world's financial institutions than to adopt more economic stimulus plans.

The Europeans, especially Germany, are worried about taking on more debt. And many in Europe also blame the current global downturn on financial institutions that badly miscalculated risk in heavy lending to consumers and corporations in recent years.

Obama said the U.S. has two goals for the so-called Group of 20 summit: to make sure there is "concerted action around the globe to jump-start the economy" and to achieve consensus on regulatory reform to take place in each country.

He did not directly criticize other nations, but he made it clear he didn't believe

that allies are doing enough compared with the United States.

"As aggressive as the actions we are taking have been so far, it's very important to make sure that other countries are moving in the same direction, because the global economy is all tied together," he said.

Obama has met with several G-20 leaders already in the lead-up to the summit, including

Japanese Prime Minister Taro Aso and British Prime Minister Gordon Brown. The president said those talks have made him "optimistic about the prospects" for a good agreement to come out of London.

Geithner, for his part, said the global recession appeared to be deepening and urged strong

global action. He said the U.S. will seek approval to expand a \$50 billion fund the IMF maintains to support countries in trouble to as much as \$500 billion.

The IMF needs much greater resources to be able to provide emergency loans to countries during the current crisis, he said.

In Toronto, meanwhile,

Canada's finance minister said Wednesday he will urge the U.S. and Europe to fix their banking systems when he attends this weekend's finance ministers meeting.

Finance Minister Jim Flaherty said Canada will emphasize "the need, the imperative, of the United States to fix its banking system and the Europeans to fix their banking system."

He said that this was the best way to restore financing and credit internationally. Geithner and Flaherty both said they would encourage G20 countries to implement stimulus plans equivalent to at least 2 percent of gross domestic product. G20 countries agreed to do that last year.

Also Wednesday, Obama signed a \$410 billion budget bill to keep the U.S. government running through September, acknowledging that he considered it "imperfect" because it had billions in spending for the pet projects of legislators.

"I am signing an imperfect omnibus bill because it's necessary for the ongoing functions of government," Obama declared. "But I also view this as a departure point for more far-reaching change."

In a sign of his discomfort with the bill, Obama signed the bill quietly rather than in public. He declined to answer a shouted reporters' question about why.

On another potentially controversial matter, the president also issued a "signing statement" with the bill, saying several of its provisions raised constitutional concerns and would be taken merely as suggestions. He has criticized President George W. Bush for often using such statements to claim the right to ignore portions of new laws, and on Monday he said his administration wouldn't follow those issued by Bush unless authorized by the new attorney general.

Obama's signing statement said he wouldn't be bound by provisions of the bill in five areas. □

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ALABAMA SHOOTER*Continued from Page B1*

The list was one of several perplexing clues that emerged about McClendon's life, but authorities could not say what set him off on the Tuesday afternoon killing spree that left his mother, grandmother and other relatives dead, as well as the wife and daughters of a law enforcement officer who was trying to chase him down.

"We found a list of people he worked with, people who had done him wrong," said Coffee County District Attorney Gary McAliley in a brief interview outside his mother's house where the rampage began. The list was made up of former employers, including a sausage plant where he suddenly quit his job last Wednesday.

The rampage started around 3:30 p.m. Tuesday, and took only about an hour from start to finish. In that time, McClendon sprayed more than 200 rounds, authorities said. First, McClendon set his mother's house on fire and killed her, then drove 12 miles and opened fire on his uncle's front porch, killing five more people and his grandmother, who lived next door, authorities said.

Then, he drove through town and fired seemingly at random, killing three more people. With police in pursuit, he ended up at the metals plant where he once worked, and shot himself after engaging in a shootout with law enforcement officers.

Three of the people struck on the porch of his uncle's house were the wife and two daughters of Geneva County Deputy Josh Myers, who was one of the law enforcement officers involved in the chase. Myers' family, who lived across the street from the gunman's relatives, was visiting the home when the gunfire erupted. Only one of the children, a 4-month old-

girl, survived and was in stable condition after being flown to a hospital across the border in Florida.

"I've been here 30 years, this is the worst thing that's ever happened in this community," Geneva County Sheriff Greg Ward said at a news conference Wednesday morning. "We have lost friends here in our community. It's going to take a while before we can get over it."

McLendon was briefly employed by the police department in Samson in 2003 but failed to complete the academy, Alabama Bureau of Investigation Chief Jerry Connor said. More recently, he worked nearly two years at food manufacturer and distributor Kelley Foods in Elba, about 25 miles north of where he shot most of his victims.

Though Kelley Foods said he left voluntarily, the company was on the list of people he felt had slighted him, said McAliley. So were another of his employers, Reliable Metals in Samson, and a Pilgrim's Pride plant near Enterprise where his mother had worked. The district attorney said the mother had recently been laid off from the plant.

McClendon worked at Reliable Metal Products until 2003, when Geneva County District Attorney Kirke Adams said he was forced to resign. A co-worker there, Jerry Hysmith, echoed Kelley Foods' description, saying McClendon was shy, quiet and laid-back.

"Something had to snap," said Hysmith, 35, who lives in Samson, and worked with McClendon in 2001.

The relatives who were killed were identified as McClendon's mother; his uncle; his cousin; a second cousin; and his grandmother.

"I cried so much yesterday, I don't have a tear left in me,"

Myers, who did not know McClendon, said. "I feel like I should be able to walk in the house and my wife would be there, my baby girl climbing on me."

The shooting comes three years after the worst mass shooting in modern American history. Student Cho Seung-Hui shot 32 people and himself on the campus of Virginia Tech university in April 2007.

The first killed Tuesday was McClendon's mother. Authorities said he put her on an L-shaped couch, piled stuff on top of her and set her afire. He said McClendon also shot four dogs at the house.

Later at his uncle's house, he gunned down the other relatives and sent panicking bystanders fleeing and ducking behind cars. His uncle's wife, Phyllis White, sought refuge in the house of neighbor Archie Mock.

"She was just saying, 'I think my family is dead, I think my family is dead,'" said Mock, 55.

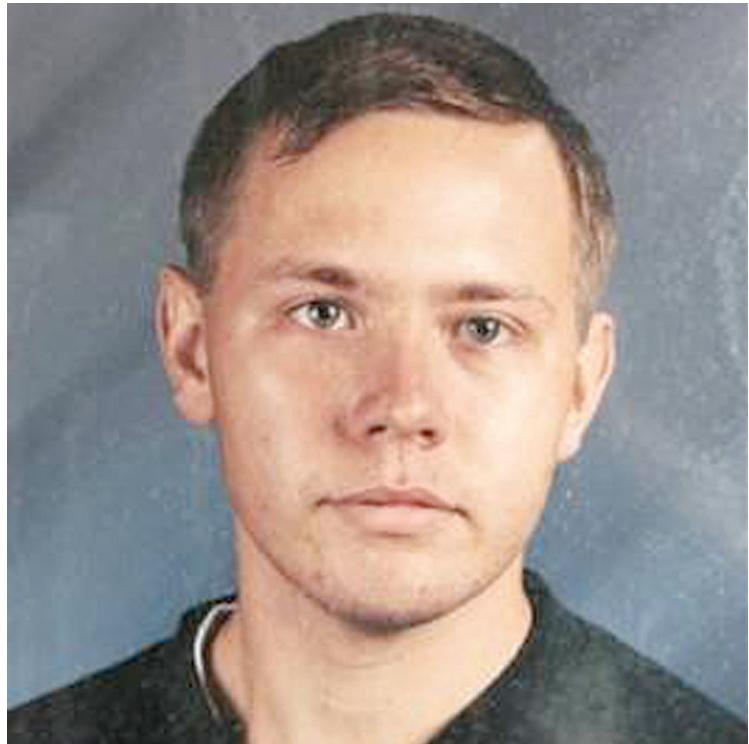
Neighbor Tom Knowles saw McClendon pull up and begin firing without saying a word, leaving his victims no time to react.

"He had no expression — just dead," he said.

McClendon went inside the house and chased Phyllis White out before driving off, Knowles said. He returned moments later in his car as if he were still looking for her. The witness then made eye contact with him.

"He had cold eyes. There was nothing. I hollered at him. I said, 'Look, boy, I ain't done nothing to you,'" Knowles said. McClendon then drove off. After the gunman left, Knowles said he and his daughter found the baby, Ella Myers, bleeding.

McClendon shot more victims at random as he drove toward the metals plant where he once worked. □

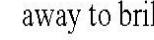
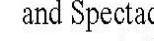
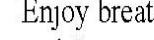
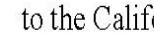
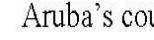
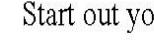
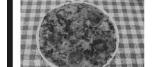


Family members of victims of a shooting rampage comfort each other outside a home on Pullum Street in Samson, Ala. on Tuesday, March 10, 2009. A coroner says the suspect in a shooting rampage that killed at least 10 people in south Alabama began his day of bloodshed by burning down his mother's house where officials found her body.

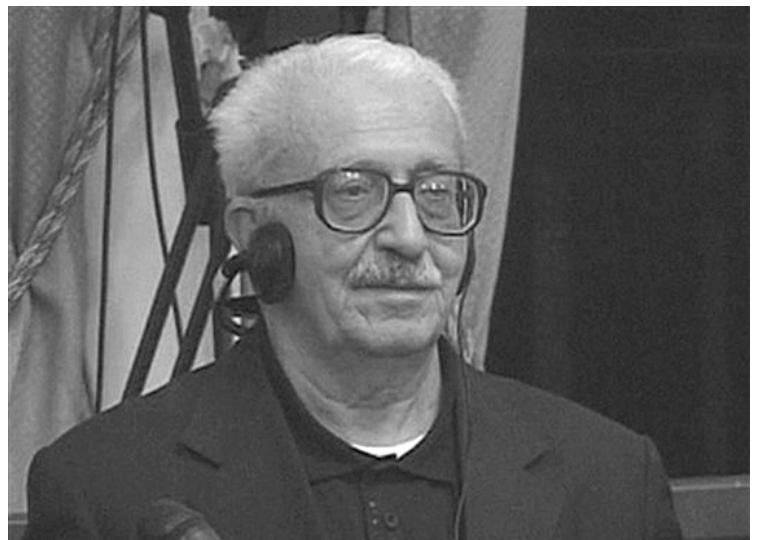
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Tariq Aziz, Saddam-era official, gets 15-year term



In this image made from television Saddam Hussein's former foreign minister, Tariq Aziz, stands in a court in Baghdad, Iraq, Wednesday, March 11, 2009, and is convicted and sentenced to 15 years in prison Wednesday for his role in the 1992 execution of 42 merchants accused of price gouging while Iraq was under U.N. sanctions. The conviction was the first against Aziz, who for years was the former regime's public face to the West.

Associated Press

By KIM GAMBEL

Associated Press Writer

BAGHDAD (AP) — For years he was the urbane, cigar-smoking face of Saddam Hussein's regime, who argued his boss' case in the international corridors of power.

TEEN KILL 15

Continued from Pag B1

There was no immediate indication of motive, but the gunman's victims were primarily female: eight of nine students killed were girls, and all three teachers were women. Three men were killed later as the suspect fled.

"I heard two shots and then screaming," said a 15-year-old student who gave her name only as Betty. "At first I thought it was a joke, but then someone called 'Run, run!' and I saw students jumping out of the windows and took off running."

The gunman — dressed in all black — took students in the first classroom completely by surprise, evidenced by the morbid scene that awaited the first officers to arrive, said regional police director Ralf Michelfelder.

"Children were sitting at their tables, with pencils still in their hands, their heads fallen over on the table," he said. "Most of them had shots in their head — it must have all happened in seconds."

Police identified the gunman only as Tim K. But the

Tariq Aziz now faces 15 years in prison for crimes against humanity in the 1992 execution of Iraqi merchants — his first conviction for his role in the ousted regime. The silver-haired former foreign minister, deputy prime minister and Saddam insider

blinked frequently Wednesday as the judge read the verdict — guilty on four counts of crimes against humanity including complicity in murder and torture.

Aziz, wearing a blue jacket, black shirt and his trademark thick, black-rimmed glasses, stood silently. When the judge finished, Aziz quietly asked if he could sit down. The request was granted.

He sat with his eyes shut as other defendants rose to hear their sentences.

Two of Saddam's half-brothers, former Interior Minister Watban Ibrahim al-Hassan and director of public security Sabawi Ibrahim, were sentenced to death in the merchants' case.

Saddam's cousin "Chemical Ali" al-Majid, who already faces three death sentences from previous cases, also got a 15-year prison sentence.

Three other defendants received sentences of life in prison, 15 years and six years. Former Central Bank

Gov. Issam Rashid Hweish was acquitted for lack of evidence.

The defendants were accused of involvement in the July 1992 roundup of 42 merchants accused by Saddam of being behind a sharp increase in food prices when the country was suffering hardships under sanctions.

The merchants were arrested over two days in Baghdad's wholesale markets and charged with manipulating food supplies to drive up prices. They were executed hours later after a quick trial. Prosecutors had argued that Aziz was complicit because he was a member of the ruling Revolutionary Command Council that rubber-stamped Saddam's decisions.

After hearing his death sentence, Ibrahim shouted "Long live Iraq" and "Down with the occupier."

"I am proud to be one of Iraq's martyrs and to join the martyr Saddam Hussein," he cried.

But Aziz, a fluent English-speaker and the only Christian in Saddam's mostly Sunni Muslim inner circle, displayed none of the bravado or self assurance that he showed when representing Iraq at the United Nations and world capitals.

Instead, it was left to his lawyer and relatives to speak out on his behalf.

Defense attorney Badee Izzat Aref said he would appeal and that Aziz was traveling in Europe when the executions occurred.

"My client had no role in the execution of the traders. He spent most of his time on diplomatic missions outside Iraq and he was removed from domestic issues," he said.

Aziz joined Saddam's Baath Party when he was 21 years old and worked for years as a journalist. A loyal party member, he changed his name from Mikhail Yuhanna to a more Arabic-sounding Tariq Aziz and rose through party ranks to the ruling Revolutionary Command Council in 1977.

He became deputy prime minister in 1979. A year later, he survived an assassination attempt by Shiite militants — an attack that was used to justify in part Saddam's invasion of Iran in 1980, triggering an eight-year war.

Aziz became internationally known as the dictator's defender and a fierce American critic as foreign minister after Iraq's invasion of Kuwait and the subsequent 1991 Gulf War.

Just weeks before the March 2003 U.S.-led invasion, Aziz met with the late Pope John Paul II at the Vatican in a bid to head off the conflict.

Aziz, who was No. 43 in the deck of cards of wanted regime figures issued after Saddam's ouster, surrendered to American forces on April 25, 2003. But he didn't face charges until last year.

Two former U.N. humanitarian coordinators and one of Iraq's senior Christians, Chaldean Cardinal Emmanuel III Delly, were among the voices calling for his release in past years.

Last week, Aziz was acquitted of being responsible for a brutal crackdown on Shiite protesters that followed the 1999 assassination of a revered cleric, Grand Ayatollah Mohammed Sadeq al-Sadr — the father of anti-U.S. cleric Muqtada al-Sadr.

Three other former regime officials were sentenced to death in that case, including Chemical Ali. It was his third death sentence for atrocities under Saddam's rule.

Aziz also faces charges in a third case involving the killing and arrest of hundreds of Kurds in the early 1980s that are still pending.

Presiding over Aziz's trial was chief judge Raouf Abdul-Rahman, who sentenced Saddam to death in November 2006 for his role in the killing of Shiite Muslims in the town of Dujail after an assassination attempt in 1982. Saddam was hanged the following December.

Aziz defended the former ruler until the end. He testified in pajamas and insisted Saddam had no choice but to crack down in the Shiite town north of Baghdad after a July 8, 1982, shooting attack on his motorcade there. □



Forensic experts leave the Albertville school complex in Winnenden near Stuttgart, Germany, Wednesday, March 11, 2009. A 17-year-old gunman dressed in black opened fire at his former high school in southwestern Germany on Wednesday, killing at least 17 people before police shot him to death, state officials said. Nine students and three teachers were among the dead, State Interior Minister Heribert Rech said.

name on his parent's home was Kretschmer and local media identified him as Tim Kretschmer. The dark-haired teen, shown wearing glasses in pictures on German television, apparently took the weapon from his father's collection of 16 firearms along with a "multitude of ammunition," police said. His father was a member of the local gun club and kept the

weapons locked away except for the pistol, which was kept in the bedroom. Police said the suspect was a German teen who was a below-average student at the school of about 1,000 pupils, but managed to graduate last year. A sister still attends the school.

"He was lower than average, and he wasn't engaged in school events," Michelfelder said. □

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Cubans applaud rolling back U.S. family travel rules

By WILL WEISSERT

Associated Press Writer

HAVANA (AP) — Cubans say Washington's easing of travel and spending restrictions for Cuban-Americans visiting the communist island will be a boon to small business and a key step toward warmer relations with the United States.

Juan Carlos Piedra will be able to see his brother, who lives in Florida, more often. Just as important, he expects more business at his little Don Lorenzo restaurant in a crumbling corner of central Havana.

"We have a lot of neighbors who have family abroad. When their relatives visit, they bring them here," said the 53-year-old restaurant owner. The U.S. Senate late Tuesday approved a \$410 billion spending bill that rolls back Bush administration restrictions on Cuban-Americans visiting relatives — effectively increasing allowable trips to once a year and spending to \$179 a day. The bill, which already passed the House of Representatives, was signed by President Barack Obama on Wednesday. It also removes limits on how long people can stay in Cuba. The vote doesn't change existing restrictions, but

prohibits spending on enforcement — thus reverting to travel rules before they were tightened by Bush in 2004 and 2005. It only remains in effect until the fiscal year ends Sept. 30, however.

"I think it is a fair measure for the Cubans who are over there and for us Cubans who are here," said Omar Lugones, a 58-year-old Cuban Central Bank employee. "It's a measure that softens relations and all that is good."

The change comes at a time of increasing global pressure for the U.S. to lift its nearly 50-year-old trade embargo against the island.

Cuba's government had no official reaction Wednesday. Instead the Communist Party daily Granma published a story about the U.S. Treasury Department fining a U.S. dairy for doing business with Cuba, saying the sanction proves the Obama White House "ratifies the policy of blockade" against this country. Criticism was also muted from Miami's Cuban expatriate community, where some have complained that eased restrictions will just put money in the pockets of the communist government, which runs 90 percent of the economy and owns the vast majority of stores where family members shop.

Obama has said he supports the trade embargo. But he can further ease travel restrictions by executive order and has indicated that he intends to do so.

"As a candidate, President Obama promised — as did the Democratic Party platform — to repeal all limits on family travel and family support, and we fully expect him to keep this pledge," said Sarah Stephens, executive director of the Washington-based Center for Democracy in the Americas.

Cuba's small, intensely regulated private sector saw significant losses when former President George W. Bush barred Americans from visiting family in Cuba more than once every three years. He also limited stays to two weeks and spending to \$50 a day.

Taxi drivers and street artists said they stand to gain from the presence of more Americans. Cuban-Americans don't mind paying top dollar for art, said Enrique Martin, who sells watercolor paintings in an open-air market near the Havana cathedral.

"An Italian may buy a painting, but he will negotiate away 80 percent of the value. An American, as a hobby, will haggle with you, but then pay



A police officer walks past a double-decker tourist bus in Havana, Wednesday, March 11, 2009. Under legislation passed late Tuesday by the U.S. Congress, restrictions on travels of U.S. citizens with family in Cuba, will be lifted allowing them to visit the island nation more often and stay as long as they like.

Associated Press

you what you want," he said. "Cuban-Americans do that too, because they have lived in the U.S. so long."

Bush also had capped the amount that can be sent from the U.S. to family on the island at \$300 every three months. Remittances are sure to grow as more visiting family members arrive with cash, rather than sending money through money transfer channels.

The U.N. Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean estimated that in 2003, Cubans abroad sent \$900 million to the island. That number fell after

the Bush restrictions, though reliable estimates on how much are hard to come by.

"It's a fact that the money that comes into the country through family remittances is indispensable," said saleswoman Lucia Pino, 34. "With the world economic crisis we are going through it is really important."

The bill also eases financing rules for imports of U.S. food and medicine into Cuba, suspending enforcement of Bush regulations that required Cuba to pay cash before Americans goods are delivered. □

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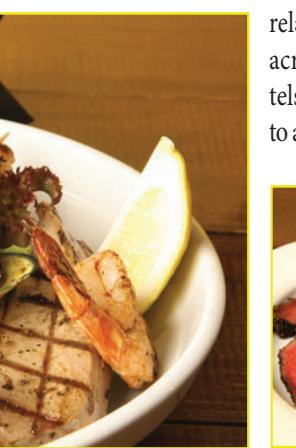
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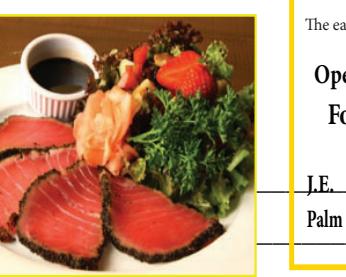
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PALM BEACH - Fishes and More Restaurant opened up in the Arawak Gardens just 3 and a half years ago and has been a great success since day one. **PALM BEACH** - Fishes and More Restaurant opened up in the Arawak Gardens just 3 and a half years ago and has been a great success since day one. Word on the street is that once you eat at Fishes and More, consider yourself addicted. The owners Jeroen Kuling and Hans Heijink together with the staff Romalo, Heidi, Mariella, Denise and Chef Gerben work hard keeping the restaurant open 7 days a week from 4 pm till 11pm for everyone to enjoy. The ambiance at the restaurant is out of this world, whether dinnin inside in the relaxed air-conditioned



dining room or outside on the terrace to enjoy the tropical breeze and daily live music. Most guests come in early for the daily fresh catches, such as Red snapper, grouper, mahi mahi, wahoo and tuna. Check with the server to find out about the Catch of the day. The chef will be more than happy to prepare your fish the way you like it best: grilled, deep-fried, pan-fried or the chef's choice. Every Wednesday, seafood specials are prepared depending on what the fishermen bring in fresh out of the water that afternoon. These



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PALM BEACH

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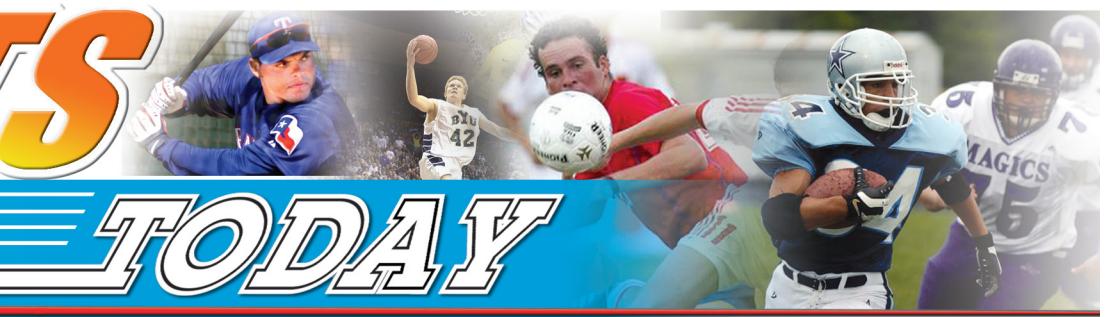
The Bistro forms part of the Taste of Belgium family, which consists of the elegant chocolaterie in the Renaissance Mall downtown, the recently opened Papillon Restaurant in The Village across from the Radisson Resort, where casual fine dining gets new meaning and the Taste of Belgium Catering Service, which takes care of all the hassles of organizing any happening, party or dinner.

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SPORTS

Aruba TODAY



Netherlands topples Dominican Republic at WBC

By OMAR MARRERO

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico (AP) — Eugene Kingsale singled in the tying run and scored the game-winner in the 11th inning Tuesday as the Netherlands rallied for a 2-1 victory over the heavily favored Dominican Republic and earn an astonishing spot in the second round of the World Baseball Classic.

After an error by first baseman Willy Aybar allowed the winning run to score, Netherlands players rushed out of the dugout and piled all over each other in a raucous celebration that resembled a World Series finale.

Jose Reyes, Robinson Cano and other Dominican stars slumped quietly in the dugout, staring ahead in shock.

"This is a miracle. The Dominican Republic is one of the best teams in the world," Netherlands manager Rod Delmonico said with tears in his eyes. "It is difficult to describe what took place. These kids have fought for three days. I have never had a team with this much passion." It was the second time in four days that a Netherlands squad made up of little-known players upset the Dominican Republic, considered one of the favorites coming into the 16-team tournament thanks to a roster filled with major league All-Stars. Even without injured Alex Rodriguez, the Dominicans featured David Ortiz, Hanley Ramirez, Miguel Tejada and Pedro Martinez, just to name a few. But in two games they couldn't solve an unheralded Netherlands pitching staff coached by former big leaguer Bert Blyleven.

Continued on Page B12



Netherlands' Gene Kingsale, second left, celebrates after scoring the winning run in the 11th inning of a World Baseball Classic game with the Dominican Republic in San Juan, Tuesday, March 10, 2009. Netherlands won 2-1.

Associated Press

NHL Roundup

Brodeur stops 35 Calgary shots to post win No. 549

NEWARK, New Jersey (AP) — Martin Brodeur moved within two wins of tying Patrick Roy's NHL career record when he made 35 saves in the New Jersey Devils' 3-2 victory over the Calgary Flames on Tuesday.

Jamie Langenbrunner, Brian Rolston and Zach Parise scored and the Devils killed off six of seven power plays in helping Brodeur post victory No. 549. New Jersey tied the franchise record with its eighth straight home victory.

Brodeur could tie Roy's mark in his native Montreal on Saturday, provided he and the Devils beat Phoenix at home on Thursday. Calgary newcomer Olli Jokinen's third goal in four games could not prevent the Flames from losing their third straight game.

Curtis Glencross scored with less than a second to play for the final goal. It came on the Flames' final power play. At Montreal, Saku Koivu scored twice, including a power-play goal 1:40 into overtime, as Montreal celebrated Bob Gainey's return to coaching with a win over Edmonton. Koivu deflected Mathieu Schneider's point shot past Dwayne Roloson for the winner after he tied it with 4:35 left in regulation on a goal that required a lengthy video review.

Referee David Banfield, who ultimately confirmed the goal to the delight of the sold-out Bell Centre crowd, pointed to the net repeatedly when the puck deflected up off Oilers defenseman Steve Staicos' stick on Andrei Kostitsyn's

centering pass and caromed in past Roloson off Koivu, who was driving hard to the net. At Philadelphia, Jeff Carter scored two goals in the third period and Scott Hartnell also had a pair as Philadelphia beat Buffalo.

Martin Biron made 27 saves and Mike Richards added a power-play goal for the Flyers, who strengthened their hold on fourth place in the Eastern Conference with their second straight win and eighth in 12 games. Maxim Afinogenov and Jochen Hecht scored for Buffalo, which is locked in a tight race for a playoff berth. At Pittsburgh, Evgeni Malkin scored Pittsburgh's first goal and then decided the shootout for the Penguins, who rallied from two goals down in the third period and beat Florida



New Jersey Devils goaltender Martin Brodeur deflects the puck during the second period of an NHL hockey game against the Calgary Flames Tuesday, March 10, 2009 in Newark, N.J. The Devils beat the Flames 3-2.

Associated Press

for their seventh consecutive victory. Kris Letang and Malkin each got the puck past Tomas Vokoun as the Penguins won their second shootout in three days. Sidney Crosby scored the tying goal and assisted on NHL scoring leader Malkin's 30th during Pittsburgh's ninth win in 11 home games. 0.□

Woods trying to get on track with Masters looming

By DOUG FERGUSON

AP Golf Writer

DORAL, Florida (AP) — Fans began showing up at Doral Golf Resort on Tuesday morning when it was dark. Several hundred surrounded the first tee when Tiger Woods finally arrived for another practice round at dawn. And then he was gone.

Unlike his short-lived return to competition two weeks ago at the Accenture Match Play Championship, where he was eliminated in the second round, this disappearing act lasted only a few seconds as he walked through a thick strip of fog that stretched across the fairway.

Woods is assured of playing four rounds this week.

The CA Championship, which starts on Thursday on the Blue Monster with a world-class field of 80 players, will be his first stroke-play tournament since he won the U.S. Open in June, a week before reconstructive surgery on his left knee.

There is no cut, which certainly

helps.

"I've only played two tournaments in what — 10 months? Not a whole lot of golf," Woods said. "So for me, I just need rounds under my belt, and this week will obviously be a very positive week for me — four rounds and no cuts, which is exactly what I need."

It is a drastic change from where he was a year ago.

Woods had won seven consecutive tournaments over six months when he showed up at Doral last year with the golf world buzzing over the prospect of a perfect season. Geoff Ogilvy stopped all the hype by winning the CA Championship. Two weeks later, Trevor Immelman ended the discussion of a Grand Slam with a three-shot victory over Woods at the Masters.

And now?

Since leaving Doral last year, Woods has played 11 rounds of tournament golf.

Sergio Garcia has a chance to replace him at No. 1 in the world this week if he wins the

CA Championship and Woods finishes 27th or worse. Woods has never been out of the top 10 at Doral, but no one really knows what to expect.

Two days in Arizona for the Match Play revealed more about the state of his knee than the state of his game.

"It was a big shot of confidence for me to get out there and play again and feel physically sound," he said. "It couldn't have been more positive, except for obviously getting beat in the second round. But from a physical standpoint, it was better than I thought it would be."

The CA Championship traditionally begins the road to the Masters.

Woods is still backing the car out of the garage.

"It is much different because I had an idea of how my game was, and the things I needed to work on, where I needed to have my game go toward," Woods said. "Right now ... I don't really know yet. That's why it's nice to be able to have the four rounds here and get



Golfer Tiger Woods smiles as he heads to the tenth tee during a practice round at the CA Championship Wednesday March 11, 2009, in Doral, Fla.

Associated Press

into a competitive stroke-play mode again. I've only had the two matches there in Arizona and that's it. It will be nice to get a better understanding of what I need to work on the next month."

At the Match Play, Woods received an ovation just for walking onto the range. Two dozen photographers captured him pulling a wedge from the

bag.

Some of that energy was missing on Tuesday. After playing 18 holes — the final 14 with Mike Weir, who will play with Woods and Robert Karlsson for the first two rounds — Woods had a news conference and joined a crowd on the putting green.

Everything was back to normal. Getting far less attention was

Ogilvy, who is emerging as a big-tournament player, if not a big-time player. The former U.S. Open champion won the Match Play two weeks ago, and with a victory at Doral can join Woods in two categories — the only players to defend a World Golf Championship event, and win consecutive WGC titles.

"Tiger has taken away from every other golf story in the last few months, which is fair enough," Ogilvy said. "He's the biggest story in golf when he's playing, and when he takes eight months off, it's obviously a big story."

The 80-man field — the largest in the 10-year history of this event — consists of the top 50 in the world rankings, and top players from the money list on the U.S. PGA, European, South African, Japan, Asian and Australasian Tours.

Woods is grateful to be back among competition and finding out where his game is.

But there is a trophy at stake, and that is not lost on him.

"I'm ready to win, yeah," he said. "That's why I'm here."

Sweden beats United States on penalties to win Algarve Cup

By DIRK HINRICHES

Associated Press Writer

FARO, Portugal (AP) — Sweden beat the United States 4-3 in a penalty shootout Wednesday in the final of the Algarve Cup. Heather Mitts hit the post in the seventh round of penalties to hand Sweden the trophy after the game ended 1-1.

The Swedes had taken the lead through a 19th-minute strike from Lotta Schelin after a defensive blunder by Shannon Boxx. However, Boxx avenged the mistake by tapping in a last-minute equalizer at the back post in the 90th.

The United States was heavily favored to win the 12-team invitational tournament but only a handful of superb saves from goalkeeper Hope Solo, who was voted the tournament's most valuable player, prevented Sweden extending its lead.

The Americans were playing in their seventh straight championship game in southern Portugal and were pursuing their sixth title.

Sweden won the title in 2001 and 1995.

"Penalties aren't only about luck," said U.S. coach Pia Sundhage, a Swede. "I know the Swedish goalkeeper (Kristin Hammarstrom) and she's very good at keeping out penalty kicks."



Sweden's players pose with their Algarve Cup trophy after defeating the United States in the final final Wednesday, March 11, 2009, outside Faro, southern Portugal. Sweden defeated the U.S. 4-3 in a penalty shoot out after the game ended in a 1-1 draw.

Associated Press

Denmark took third place with a 1-0 win over two-time world champion Germany thanks to a 41st-minute strike from Julie Rydahl-Bukh.

China finished fifth by defeating Iceland 2-1, and Finland beat Portugal 4-2 on penalties after the game ended 1-1 to take seventh place. Norway overcame Austria 2-0 for ninth place, and Poland won 2-1 against Wales to finish 11th. □

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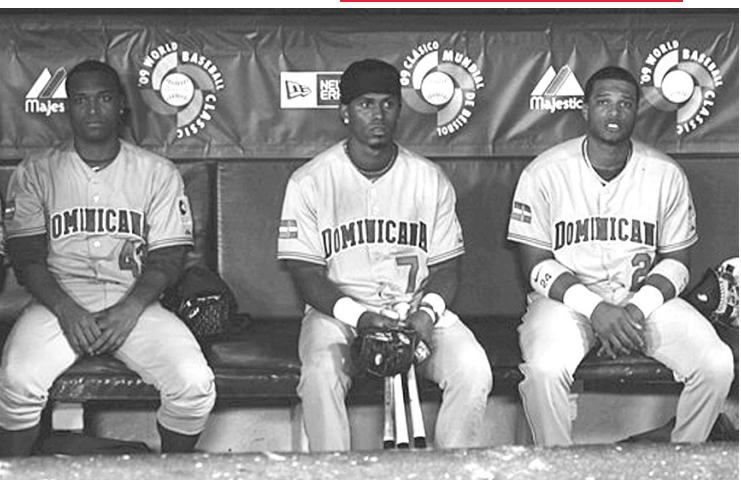
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Republic's Damaso Marte, left, Jose Reyes, center, and Robinson Cano sit in the dugout after losing 2-1 to the Netherlands after a World Baseball Classic game in San Juan, Tuesday, March 10, 2009.

Associated Press

WBC**Continued from Page B10**

"With so many years in this game and in so many different leagues, when someone thinks they have seen it all, they end up being wrong," Dominican Republic manager Felipe Alou said. "We have seen something happen that we never imagined." Netherlands players were still on the field celebrating 15 minutes after the game ended.

The Dominican Republic reached the semifinals of the inaugural WBC in 2006, and a first-round exit in Group D this time seemed almost unthinkable a few days ago.

Then, the Netherlands won 3-2 in the teams' tournament opener Saturday. The Dominican Republic bounced back for a 9-0 victory Sunday over Panama, but was stymied again Tuesday night before a pro-Dominican crowd of 11,814 at Hiram Bithorn Stadium.

"For me, who might be making this my last job as a manager, this is not the best way to check out because we were supposed to defeat that team two times," Alou said.

The Netherlands (2-1) will face Puerto Rico (2-0) on Wednesday for first place in Group D. Puerto Rico needed a late rally to win the first game between the teams, 3-1 on Monday. Both clubs begin second-round play Saturday in Miami.

"Tonight we are going to try to rest, even though it will be difficult with all the emotion," Delmonico said.

Tuesday night's game was scoreless until the 11th inning, when Kingsale misplayed Jose Bautista's two-out liner to right for an error that let the speedy Reyes score all the way from first base. Pinch-hitter Sidney de Jong doubled to start the bottom of the 11th against Chicago Cubs reliever Carlos Marmol. A groundout by pinch-hitter Curt Smith moved de Jong to third, and he scored on Kingsale's single to right.

Marmol then uncorked a wild pickoff throw that caromed toward the right-field line and allowed de Jong to reach third. After Sharlon Schoop struck out, Randall Simon was intentionally walked and Yurendell DeCaster slapped a one-hopper toward the first-base line that could have been handled by Aybar. But it glanced off his glove and rolled away into foul territory as Kingsale raced toward the plate.

Aybar retrieved the ball, spun and threw to Marmol covering first, but it was too late. DeCaster beat the play with a feet first slide to the bag, then popped up and jumped into the arms of a teammate.

"I am very proud of the work we have done," DeCaster said. "I agree that this is a team with a lot of confidence, but I expect us to be even stronger in the next Classic."

Dominican Republic starter Ubaldo Jimenez set a tournament record with 10 strikeouts in four innings. The previous mark was eight by Japanese pitcher Koji Ueharaon in 2006 against South Korea.

Venezuela 10, Italy 1

At Toronto, Bobby Abreu and Miguel Cabrera hit consecutive long balls to start a four-homer outburst in the fifth inning that powered Venezuela into the second round. □

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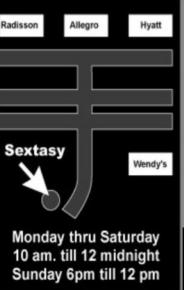
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Presidente boliviano Morales pide a Obama que apoye campaña coca

VIENA (Reuters) - El presidente de Estados Unidos, Barack Obama, debe reconocer los usos tradicionales de la hoja de coca porque no toda su producción se convierte en cocaína, dijo el miércoles el presidente boliviano, Evo Morales. Morales, un ex líder cocalero, también pidió a los participantes en una reunión de política antinarcóticos de Naciones Unidas (ONU) en Viena que levanten la prohibición que rige sobre la coca para permitir algunos usos específicos.

"Mi principal objetivo (al venir aquí) es defender a la coca, luchar por la coca", dijo Morales en una conferencia de prensa donde sus declaraciones

en español fueron traducidas al alemán. Bolivia es el tercer productor mundial de cocaína después de Colombia y Perú. Millones de personas en Bolivia y el país vecino Perú usan la coca, la materia prima de la cocaína, para prevenir enfermedades relacionadas a la altura y para calmar el hambre. En su forma natural, la hoja también se usa para hacer té, para cocinar y para ceremonias religiosas.

"Esperamos el apoyo del presidente Obama para la despenalización de la coca", dijo Morales, según la cita traducida desde el alemán. Agregó que Bolivia está comprometida en la lucha contra la cocaína y otras

drogas ilícitas. El nuevo presidente estadounidense tiene "muchas similitudes conmigo", señaló Morales al comentar que esperaba que Obama pudiera ayudarlo en su larga cruzada a favor de la coca en honor a las cosas en común.

El mandatario boliviano argumentó que anteriormente nadie podía creer que un indígena llegara a ser jefe de Estado de Bolivia, al igual que nadie creía que un hombre de raza negra llegara a la presidencia de Estados Unidos.

Morales, que prohibió en su país el trabajo de agentes antidroga estadounidenses, dijo que Bolivia podía luchar

contra el tráfico de cocaína por su cuenta.

El mandatario ordenó en noviembre del año pasado a la agencia antidroga estadounidense DEA (Drug Enforcement Administration) suspender su trabajo en Bolivia luego que la acusó de espionaje y conspiración para atentar contra su Gobierno.

Un reporte del Departamento de Estado estadounidense dijo en febrero que la producción de cocaína boliviana aumentó rápidamente el año pasado debido a un mayor cultivo y métodos de fabricación más eficientes.

También informó que Bolivia no había cumplido con sus obligaciones bajo acuerdos internacionales.

El jefe de la agencia anticriminal de la ONU dijo el miércoles que una iniciativa lanzada hace 10 años para acabar con la droga ilícita había fracasado parcialmente porque enriqueció tanto



El presidente de Bolivia, Evo Morales, sostiene una hoja de coca durante una conferencia de prensa realizada en Viena, 11 mar 2009. REUTERS/Dominic Ebenbichler (AUSTRIA)

a los carteles, que ahora pueden usar el soborno para operar en África Occidental y Centroamérica, y minó la seguridad y el desarrollo. □

Temblor con magnitud de 6,3 grados Costa Rica

SAN JOSE (AP) - Un sismo de 6,3 grados sacudió el miércoles el territorio costarricense, principalmente la zona sur, informó el Observatorio Vulcanológico y Sismológico (Ovsicori) sin reportes inmediatos sobre posibles consecuencias.

El movimiento provocó pánico entre algunos pobladores, sobre todo al sur del país. "Fue espantoso, algo increíble. La gente estaba como en pánico, se tiró a la calle. Hace tiempo no sentía algo así", relató a la radiodifusora un oyente no identificado.

El reporte detalló que el epicentro se ubicó 12 kilómetros al suroeste de Golfito, ciudad costera en el Pacífico Sur y a unos 315 kilómetros al suroeste de la capital.

Juan Segura del Ovsicori señaló que el sismo fue sentido

a las 11.24 de la mañana. "No fue sentido tan fuerte por parte de la población debido a que el temblor tuvo una profundidad de 28 kilómetros", agregó el funcionario en declaraciones a la emisora radial Monumental.

El sismo también fue sentido en las provincias panameñas de Bocas del Toro y Chiriquí, fronterizas con Costa Rica. En esas zonas, de acuerdo a reportes radiales, los habitantes vieron como se movieron objetos en las residencias. □

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